

## **Better Than Alright by Collie Parkillo**

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**Summary:** Bill hits Ben with his bike and some unexpected things ensue. BillBen.

## Better Than Alright

Ben Hanscom didn't see the bike coming. He was thinking about Beverly Marsh, his feet rustling the piles of dry leaves on the sidewalk and his eyes staring blankly up at the clear, grey sky, not really looking at it. It was more like he was looking through it. He was imagining Beverly Marsh's hand in his own. She'd say she was cold, and he'd take off his scarf and put it around her and say she could borrow it for as long as she wanted if she didn't have one. She'd say no, my daddy will ask me where I got it, I can't. That was where his fantasy got a little less cheerful and a little more depressing.

That was also when Bill Denbrough hit him with his bike.

Ben was knocked down, his knees scraping against the concrete. He managed to catch himself with his hands, which absolutely smarted.

"J-Jesus! B-Ben! Sorry!" Bill's face was almost as red as his hair. His big silver bike stood menacingly beside him. He put down the kickstand with one foot and knelt beside Ben, offering him a hand up. When he drew his hand away and Ben was on his feet again, Bill's hand had blood on it. Ben shrieked and looked down at his hands, which had small scrapes all across his palms.

"It's not the worst that's happened to me," Ben said, his voice shaking. "It's alright, I'll just-"

"N-no! C-come with me! M-my house is closer!" Ben took a step forward and as his knees contracted pain shot up his legs. He looked down and saw red scrapes on each knee. "On Silver!" Bill gestured to his bike. "Y-you won't have to walk, then!"

Ben didn't mention that he thought he was probably too heavy to ride on the back of Bill's bike, but Bill seemed pretty intent on the idea. So he left it alone and climbed on, wrapping his arms around Bill's waist, careful not to get his hands on Bill's clothes. It must have looked pretty funny, Ben thought. Tall, stocky Ben and short, skinny Bill, with Ben holding onto Bill for support. "HII-YOOO-SILVER, AWAYYYYY!" Bill shouted and practically kicked the pedals with the enthusiasm of a racecar driver putting his foot on the gas. Ben was almost completely sure he was going to go spilling off of the bike and

onto the concrete and at the speed Bill was going at, he'd probably end up dead, not just with two skinned knees.

But the weird thing was that he trusted Bill not to let him fall off. That was the thing about Bill. He was a leader. He was Big Bill. He wouldn't let you fall off his bike, and if you fell, he'd probably pick you right back up, even if you were dead. Could Bill raise the dead? Ben figured that if he could, he probably would have already, given what had happened to his...

Let's not think about that, Ben told himself, and shut his eyes to try to get the images of him flying off the bike and cracking his head open out of his mind. When Ben opened his eyes, they were in front of Bill's house. Silver screeched to a stop, blowing Ben forward against Bill. Bill put down the kickstand and Ben hopped off, feeling the pain in his knees again. He wobbled and hooked his arm around Bill's shoulder. He felt kind of like he was going to crush him if he fell over, and really hoped that didn't happen. The walk to Bill's front door felt like an eternity, and Ben didn't dare look down at his legs. They hurt so bad he was surprised they weren't broken or something.

"M-mom!"

"She's out, Bill." The voice of Bill's father came back.

Bill didn't respond to him. He turned to Ben. "The bathroom is upstairs. C-can you make it up the stairs?"

"Sure," Ben said, even though he wasn't sure at all. Bill managed to get him up the stairs alright and sat him down on top of the toilet in the Denbrough family bathroom. He wet a washcloth in the sink, with the kind of precision that Ben would have thought he'd done this before. Maybe he'd done it for George when he was still alive. Ben gulped. Maybe that was why Bill was so quiet.

"G-give me your hand," Bill said. Ben held out his palm and Bill pressed the cloth against it. It felt cool and soft. The cloth was stained red when he drew it away, but it didn't seem to faze Bill. "O-other hand now." Ben held out his other hand and Bill repeated the process. Bill stood up and fumbled in the cabinet for something, and produced some cream and a box of BandAids.

"S-sorry for hitting you with the bike," Bill said. "I-I guess I should be more careful."

"It wasn't your fault," Ben said. And he actually meant it. It wasn't like when Henry Bowers hurt him-this was just purely an accident. Bill wet the washcloth again and dabbed it on both his knees. He unscrewed the bottle of cream and squirted a little of it onto the skin, then blew on it, reminding Ben that Bill was just a kid like him. It wasn't like he was a doctor or anything.

As Bill patted down the BandAid on his knee, it hit him how much he looked like Beverly. They looked like they were related or something. He had her soft, red hair and her freckles. Only his eyes were green where hers were blue. He was applying cream like Ben wasn't even there, like he was doing it to a mannequin. "I'm n-not sure what BandAids to p-put on your hand."

While staring at Bill and thinking how much he looked like Beverly, Ben said something totally out of his mind. "Can you kiss it?" Then, realizing what he'd said: "My mom does that." Which was a total lie, but anything to justify the strange tingly feeling he had.

Bill didn't respond, merely took his left hand and lightly kissed his palm, then took his right and did the same. It was quick. It felt kind of like a butterfly had landed on his palm, then quickly flown away. Ben bit down on his lower lip contemplatively. It probably wouldn't have felt any different if it was Beverly. Girl lips and boy lips probably felt the same.

"Y-your lip!" Bill said, sounding concerned. Ben stood up and looked in the mirror. Blood was flowing from his lower lip.

"Oh. Crap." He paused, then realized the opportunity he had here. "Can you kiss it?" Both burst out laughing. But Bill did. And it felt good. Way better than Ben would have thought it did.

Bill wasn't Beverly, but he was alright. Better than alright.

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**So I assigned each of the Losers a number and used a random number generator and got Bill and Ben as a pairing, and used a**

random prompt generator and got "Injuries." So here it is. It was a lot of fun.